handloom sector. The financial package for Handloom Sector worth Rs. 1945.77 crore for phase I has been sent to Ministry of Finance for their approval. This financial package to handloom sector shall provide (i) loans to handloom sector at lower rate of interest of 7% (ii) Waiver of overdue loans and interest of Weavers/PWCSs/Apex Societies as on 31.03.2007.

Bio-metric survey of handloom weavers

†2298. SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted a bio-metric survey of handloom weavers through the office of Development Commissioner, Handloom and it also proposes to issue identity cards to the weavers after the survey;

(b) if so, by when these identity cards would be provided to the weavers; and

(c) by when a direct grant under handloom schemes through the accounts of CBS bank would be made to weavers after the bio-metric survey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) No, Sir, However, the work of 3rd National Handloom Census and issue of photo identity cards to the eligible Handloom Weavers and allied workers is being carried out for the present. The contract has been awarded to the National Council of Allied Economic Research (NCAER) on 19th March, 2008. It will also issue Photo Identity Cards to all the eligible handloom weavers enumerated during the Census operations, once census work is completed. The work is in progress.

(c) Not applicable as no biometric survey is being conducted.

Converting handlooms into powerlooms in Tamil Nadu

2299. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of handlooms in the State of Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(b) whether the Union Government proposes to take any steps to convert handlooms into powerlooms;

(c) if so, the details and time-frame fixed for the same; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per joint Census of Handlooms and Powerloom Report 1995-96, there are 4,13,174 handlooms in the States of Tamil Nadu. District-wise details of Handlooms are maintained by the State Government.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.